

**This Core Document for the B&NES Core Strategy examination reproduces the text of the CURDS website on 'The Geography of Housing Markets Areas in England'**

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**Newcastle University, Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies website**

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/curds/research/defining/NHPAU.htm>

CURDS hosts this web page presenting the results from the Geography of Housing Market Areas in England research project funded by the [National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit](#) (NHPAU).

The project was undertaken by a multi-university research team led by [Prof Colin Jones](#) (Heriot-Watt University). [Mike Coombes](#) led the CURDS research, with the other major component of the project led by [Prof Cecilia Wong](#) (Manchester University).

Some of the project outputs that can be accessed from links below include maps which use Ordnance Survey material as background. This material was held by the NHPAU as part of the pan-government agreement and is reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. ©-(**Crown copyright and database right 2009. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018986.**)

The research has produced the first theoretically-based and rigorously-defined housing market area (HMA) boundaries for England. It was particularly innovative in drawing on three different strands of evidence: commuting, migration and housing price patterns. It has also explored the potential advantages and feasibility of defining multiple 'tiers' of HMAs. The findings of the research are summarised in the overview research [Report](#) (PDF: 1.3MB).

The project involved three principal Stages and each of these produced at least one detailed report.

- [Stage 1](#) (PDF: 3.75MB) led by Heriot-Watt and Manchester reviewed principles behind definitions of HMAs and examined how these principles had been implemented in each region of the country, with a detailed examination of different approaches applied to the North West
- [Stage 2](#) (PDF: 2.0MB) led by CURDS involved new methodological developments to define HMAs
- Stage 3 included a Manchester-led [review](#) (PDF: 9.2MB) of spatial planning issues and implications, as well as [analyses](#) (PDF: 159KB) of affordability by Heriot-Watt.

The outcome of the research centres on [HMA definitions with a tiered structure where appropriate](#) (PDF: 644KB) (eg. London). The objective of this structure was to provide HMA boundaries that would be useful for the planning of housing:

- a set of Strategic HMAs covers the whole country, providing appropriate areas for the modelling and analysis of affordability in particular,
- in more urbanised regions especially Strategic HMAs are split into a 'lower tier' of Local HMAs for detailed monitoring of the balance of housing supply and demand (n.b. elsewhere the Strategic HMAs are undivided).

The research has also provided, as an alternative, a [single tier set of HMAs](#) (PDF: 1.0MB).

These sets of HMAs are termed 'gold standard' because their boundaries are defined to the maximum possible level of detail. They group the c.9000 [wards used for migration and commuting datasets](#) which were made available from the 2001 Census: thanks are due to the Office for National Statistics for allowing temporary access to unpublished data on migration by Moving Group Reference Persons aged 25 or more. © **Census output is Crown copyright and is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.**

To produce the 'gold standard' boundaries there were some slight changes to the groupings of wards produced by the computerised analyses of the Census datasets: these minor adjustments were needed to prevent any boundary non-contiguity (in which the HMA would include a ward that was separated from the rest of the HMA by intervening areas belonging to one or more different HMAs). Along with the 'gold standard' HMA definitions there are 'silver standard' versions which represent the best possible match to the original definitions that are obtainable by grouping whole local authorities (LAs). These definitions use LA areas as at 2003 so as to maximise the data available for them. There is a ['silver standard' version of Strategic HMAs](#) (PDF: 278KB) plus a ['silver standard' single tier set of HMAs](#) (PDF: 219KB).

It should be stressed that the research was committed to producing appropriate HMA boundaries for England and this has two implications for the results in Wales and Scotland. The first is that the HMAs can straddle national borders where – as with Berwick for example – the border is spanned by the patterns of movement that characterise HMAs. The second is that the research has not had the same level of commitment to producing HMA boundaries that are necessarily appropriate for policy or other use in the other countries of Britain. For example, 'silver standard' definitions of Strategic HMAs were only produced for England.

In addition to the reports and maps available by following the links above, there are various datasets and more technical outputs which can be obtained by following the links below.

<b>Map with code numbers for:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (PDF: 182KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (PDF: 87KB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (PDF: 90KB)
<b>Map with names for:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (PDF: 260KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (PDF: 4.8MB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (PDF: 102KB)
<b>HMA code numbers and names for:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (Excel: 27KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (Excel : 59KB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (Excel: 26KB)
<b>Ward allocations to:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (Excel: 600KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (Excel: 600KB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (Excel: 600KB)
<b>Migration statistics for:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (Excel: 25KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (Excel: 45KB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (Excel: 26KB)
<b>Commuting statistics for:</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (Excel: 24KB)	<a href="#">Local HMAs</a> (Excel: 46KB)	<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (Excel: 26KB)
<b>LA allocations to ('silver standard'):</b>	<a href="#">Strategic HMAs</a> (Excel: 48KB)		<a href="#">single-tier set of HMAs</a> (Excel: 51KB)

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